

For Immediate Release

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Bridgestone Donates Tools, Automotive Service Supplies to Maplewood High School Students

- **Bridgestone is donating tools and other automotive service supplies to students participating in the Maplewood High School Automotive Training Center to ensure a successful start to the 2021-2022 school year.**
- **As part of its commitment to building a more diverse and inclusive workforce, Bridgestone will cover the cost for the Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) certification test for all junior and senior students.**
- **Since the program's inception in 2015, dozens of Maplewood graduates have accepted positions working at Nashville-area Firestone Complete Auto Care stores.**

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (August 13, 2021) – As part of its continued commitment to improving the communities where it operates and building a more diverse and inclusive workforce, [Bridgestone Americas](#) (Bridgestone) today announced it will increase support for students participating in the 2021-2022 Maplewood High School Automotive Training Center curriculum.

Bridgestone today held a 'welcome back' celebration for Maplewood automotive service students who returned to campus this week after a year of remote learning during the 2020-2021 school year. At the event, Bridgestone donated backpacks filled with safety glasses and other automotive service tools to the 90 Maplewood students who will study at the Automotive Training Center for the upcoming school year.

In addition, the company announced it will pay for Maplewood juniors and seniors to take the Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) certification test, removing cost barriers and making the certification more accessible for all. ASE certification is widely respected by leading automotive service employers and can help increase earning potential for a future career in the automotive service industry.

"Our partnership with Maplewood began with the intention of supplying young people with the opportunity to work in the automotive industry, and it has quickly become one of our biggest points of pride in our hometown of Nashville," said Robert Johnson, vice president

of stores, Bridgestone Retail Operations (BSRO). “We are proud to provide critical resources so Maplewood can continue educating the next generation of automotive industry professionals and we can fulfill our vision for a more diverse and inclusive automotive service industry.”

Kicking off the event was Sonya Brooks, Principal of Maplewood High School, and Kathy Floyd-Buggs, from Nashville Mayor John Cooper’s Office of Neighborhoods and Community Engagement. Bridgestone president and CEO Paolo Ferrari, along with Gabriel Asbun, group president of integrated businesses, and Robert Johnson, were also onsite to welcome the students. Ms. TJ Williams, the Automotive Training Center Instructor and part-time Bridgestone employee, gave the students a rousing pep talk, and words of encouragement for the year to come.

“This welcome back event highlights the great partnership between Bridgestone and Maplewood High School and a program that is the pinnacle of transforming secondary education,” said Brent Dean, academy coach, Maplewood High School. “It takes a village to help our students learn and grow, and they flourish even more knowing how much support they’re receiving from teachers, families and our business and community partners. We are so grateful to Bridgestone, Paolo and team, and we look forward to another outstanding six years of training the next generation of automotive service professionals.”

The Automotive Training Center at the Maplewood Academy of Entrepreneurship and Innovation was developed in 2015 by Bridgestone and Metro Nashville Public Schools in response to a nationwide shortage of automotive technicians. The four-year program utilizes an onsite, fully functioning Firestone Complete Auto Care tire and automotive service store and gives students an opportunity to interact with customers and practice the skills they’ve learned in the classroom. More than 110 students have graduated from the program, and dozens of students have accepted positions working at Nashville-area Firestone Complete Auto Care stores.

For more Bridgestone company news visit [BridgestoneAmericas.com](https://www.BridgestoneAmericas.com).

About Bridgestone Americas, Inc.:

Nashville, Tennessee-based Bridgestone Americas, Inc. is a subsidiary of Bridgestone Corporation, a global leader providing sustainable mobility and advanced solutions. Bridgestone Americas develops, manufactures and markets a diverse portfolio of original equipment and replacement tires, tire-centric solutions, mobility solutions, and other rubber-associated and diversified products that deliver social value and customer value. Guided by its global corporate social responsibility commitment, Our Way to Serve, Bridgestone is dedicated to shaping a sustainable future of mobility and improving the way people move, live, work and play.

About Bridgestone Retail Operations, LLC:

Bridgestone Retail Operations, LLC (BSRO) is headquartered in Nashville, Tennessee, and operates more than 2,200 tire and vehicle service centers across the United States – including Firestone Complete Auto Care, Tires Plus, Hibdon Tires Plus and Wheel Works store locations. Credit First National Association and Firestone Complete Fleet Care operations also are part of BSRO. BSRO is a subsidiary of Bridgestone Americas, Inc.

About Metro Nashville Public Schools:

Metro Nashville Public Schools is one of the nation's 50 largest school districts, preparing students for higher education, work, and life. With the goal of being the first choice for Nashville families, Metro Schools is committed to the mission of delivering a great public education to every student, every day. For more information, visit MNPS.org, and follow us on Twitter @MetroSchools and on Facebook and Instagram /MetroSchools.

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